

The 2009 Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey

Purpose: Monitoring the health of Maine's youth by collecting survey data on a regular basis is an important role for schools and state agencies. The data is used for improving health knowledge and skills, physical and behavioral health status, and program delivery in schools. Many state agencies and schools use the data for grant and other applications. However, as the demands for data, evaluation and accountability have increased, the number of state health and prevention programs that use student health surveys has also increased, putting a greater burden on schools. These concerns prompted the formation of the Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey (MIYHS).

Benefits to Schools:

- Reduction of the burden imposed by multiple surveys
- Predictability of request for surveys from state agencies
- A wider range of data

Goals:

- Providing a single survey framework encompassing a comprehensive set of topics about youth behavior and the influences of the student's social environment on that behavior.
- Allowing any Local Education Agencies (LEA's) to take part in the survey, and to receive core data that is specific to the district or school, within the limits imposed by the need to protect student confidentiality.
- Ensuring that anonymous student participation is voluntary for both parents and students.
- Ensuring the state's ability to provide federal and state level data for funding and other requirements.
- Ensuring that the length and content of the survey fits, to the extent possible, the reading capacity of the targeted grades.
- Requesting school participation in only one state-endorsed survey every two years.
- Assisting LEA's and communities in having data to use in applications for state and federal funding for the purpose of improving the health of Maine youth.

Survey Design

Four age-appropriate levels:

- High school (99-110 questions)
- Middle school (seventh and eighth grades) (80 questions)
- Fifth/sixth grade (50 questions)
- Kindergarten/third grade PARENT survey (50 questions)

Topics:

- Demographics, including race/ethnicity², gender, age, language spoken at home, and sexual orientation.
 - Unintentional injury and safety
 - Violence, including weapon carrying, and sexual violence
 - Bullying and harassment
 - Suicide and self injury
 - Tobacco use
 - Alcohol use
 - Marijuana and other drug use
 - Sexual behaviors
 - Community, school and family assets
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- Negative social influences associated with substance use and other prohibited behaviors, including access to substances, parental attitudes, community norms, enforcement, peer norms, and perception of harm.
- Physical activity
 - Nutrition
 - Chronic diseases
 - Sun protection
 - Disability (physical and mental)
 - Health care, including oral health care
 - Gambling

Sources:

- The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)
- The Maine Youth Drug and Alcohol Use Survey (MYDAUS)
- The Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS)
- The Search Institute's Developmental Assets Profile
- Other state and national surveys

Screening (for Kindergarten, 3rd and 5th grades in a sample of schools):

- Height
- Weight
- Oral Health

Question distribution and local, county, public health district and state data:

- High school survey (4 versions):
 - 58 core questions are on all 4 versions of the survey and provide data at all geographic levels, including school and school district
 - 42 questions are on 2 versions of the survey and provide county, public health district and state level data.
 - 100 questions are on only 1 version of the survey and provide state level data only.
- Middle school survey (4 versions):
 - 58 core questions are on all 4 versions of the survey and provide data at all geographic levels, including school and school district
 - 23 questions are on 2 versions of the survey and provide county, public health district and state level data.

- 69 questions are on only 1 version of the survey and provide state level data only.
- 5th/6th Grade Survey (1 version)
 - Participating schools and/or districts can receive data on all questions.
 - Sampling of schools will provide public health district and state level data.
- K/3 parent survey (1 version) will provide state level data only for 2009

Access to Data

- School districts will have control over data at the school level.
- Community partners will be asked to get local data from the schools.
- Data will be suppressed if there are low numbers of responses to protect student anonymity.

Timeline:

- School recruitment began in September.
- Students will be taking the survey in early February (in a few cases, the survey will be administered in early April).
- K/3 parent surveys will be taking place throughout this school year.
- K/3/5 height/weight and oral health screening will be taking place from December through the end of the school year.

MIYHS Committee:

- Maine Department of Education
- Office of Substance Abuse
- Partnership for a Tobacco-Free Maine
- Other Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention programs
- Maine Marks staff
- Communities for Children and Youth
- Maine Department of Labor

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[<http://dev.informe.org/maineosa/survey/pdf/MIYHS.pdf>.]